A LAMENTABLE COMPLAINT OF THE COMMONALTY, BY WAY OF SVPPLICATION TO THE HIGH COVRT OF PARLIAMENT, FOR A LEARNED MINISTERY.

In Anno. 1585.

TO THE READER.

BEcause our desire was, that this our complaint should be communicated to euery one of the honorable of parliament, and finding no other waies to perfourme the same: we desired that it might be done by the way of printing. And we pray, that this our request may be made knowne to her maiesty, who in all ciuill causes appertaining to this present life, is a myror of mercy, so we trust that her bowelles of pitty and compassion will abound and exceede in this matter, that concerneth the saluation of the soules of her louing subiectes, and that as she is the head and cheefest, so wee trust that her hand will be most forward in this sacrifice and seruice of the lorde, which he requireth for all the benefites that he hath most plentifully powred vppon her maiesty, and vppon vs by her maiesties gratious gouernment.

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THE CRY AND COMPLAINT of the Commonalty of this Lande, by way of Supplication, to the right honourable assembly of the high court of parliament, to prouide by law a godly learned ministery.

IN most humble maner that we may, (most gratious Soueraign, and right honorable assembly) we fall down before your feete, euen in the dust, presenting before you a most waighty petition. It is not much vnlike that petition, that HESTER made to the King ASSVERVS: saying, If I haue found fauour in thy sight, and if it seeme good vnto the King, let my life bee giuen me at my petition, and my people at my request. For we are sold, I and my people to be destroied, to bee slaine, and to perish. And when the king demaunded, who had done that deede, the Queene aunswered that wicked HAMMON. In like wise, so many congregations of vs, as be in this Land, destitute of a godly minister, to preach vnto vs the word of Saluation (as there be exceeding many) do intreat for our life, and the life of our Neighbours. For we are sold to be destroyed, to be slaine, and to perish eternally, if by your gratious helpe, speedy *Ester. 7. 4.*

remedy be not had. If queſtion bee made, who hath done this deede? we aunſwere, the blinde guides, and vnlearned Curates, that are ſet ouer vs. In deede, we confeſſe, that our ſinnes, and the ſinnes of our forefathers are multiplied without meaſure, and grown exceeding great, and haue grieuouſly prouoked the Lords wrath, to ſtrike vs with ſuch â grieuous plague as there is none greater vnder the heauens. As wee reade, that the Lorde threatned the Iewes by the Prophete ZACHARIE, ſaying: For, loe I will raiſe vp a Shepeheard in the Lande, which ſhall not looke for the thyng that is loſt, nor ſeeke the tender Lambes, nor heale that is hurt, nor feede that which ſtandeth, but hee ſhall eate the fleſh of the fat, and teare their claws in peeces. O Idoll ſhepheard that leaueth the flocke! The like deſcription is made of will Shepheards, in the 34. of EZECHIEL, with â Woe pronounced againſt them. By this, we truſt it doth appeare, what we requeſt, euen, that it woulde pleaſe God, to mooue you, to make â firme, and ſtable law, like vnto the Lawes of the Medes and Perſians, that cannot be altered; nay, rather to confirme God his lawe, already eſtabliſhed in his

his Worde, that euery Congregation of vs may haue one, or two Godly learned preachers ſet ouer vs, as euery Congregation is greater, or leſſer, and theſe dumb Idolls, the moſte peſtilent enimies wee haue in the worlde, remooued from vs as farre as the Eaſt is from the Weſt; And that whoſoeuer doth violate that holy law and decree, let his body be drawne in peeces, and his houſe made â Iakes; becauſe he ſeeketh the diſhonor of the mighty God, the king of all the earth, as by NABVCHADNEZER it was decreed. So ſhal it appeare, that you are not only carefull for this preſent age, ſo to prouide that we may bee taught the feare of God, but that our poſterity may know it alſo, and the children which are yet vnborn, may ſtand vp & declare it to their children, that they may ſet their hope in GOD, and not forget the works of the Lord, but keep his commaundements. We confeſſe that the greateſt part of vs are the fartheſt of frō the deſire, and not ſo much as once thinke hereof: the more we are to be pitied. Notwithſtāding, ſith ſome of vs hath taſted the good word of God, and how gratious the Lord is to thoſe which know & feare him, in tender loue, and compaſſion, to our bre-

thrē, finding no other way, we vncouer the tiles of your house of Parliament, & let thē downe with cordes before you, to stirre vp your bowels of compassion towards them; as the mā which had the palsey, was brogh̄t before our Sauior Christ. Concerning the minister appointed to the house of God by his worde, we find it written (most noble Queene, & right Hon. assembly) in that sacred Booke which you haue deliuered vnto vs, as the true word of God, & so, with al thankſgiuing, we receiue it: that he must be blameleſſe in life, free frō a great number of vices (which S. PAVL to TIMOTHIE & TITVS reherseth) & garnished with the contrary vertues; & aboue all, he must be skilfull, to teach the word of God, able to exhort by sound doctrine, & to conuince the aduersary. Yea, he must be that mā of God, that is perfectly enstructed in holy Scriptures, to euery good worke; not onely to teach sound doctrine, & confute errors; but also to reform maners & instruct in the way of righteousnes, to cast downe the proud, to raise vp the humble, to comfort the distressed; to encourage him that walketh in the right way, to reproue him that runneth out of the way: and finally, to declare to all men,

men,as Princes,Magiſtrates, and all other inferiour perſons, of what calling ſoeuer they be,their generall and particular duties out of the word of God. And therefore he is worthily compared,in the Goſpell to the rich houſholder, which bringeth out of his treaſury,things old and new.He is the Embaſſadour of the moſt high king vnto his people, to declare vnto them the whole counſell of God. Afterward he is mightily to deuide the Word of God to the people, as the onely foode of their ſoules, a diſpoſer of the ſecreats of God, a father to beget vs with the immortall ſeede of the worde,a mother to nouriſh vs vp in the ſame: a ſtarr or light, to cauſe the glorious Goſpell of Chriſt to ſhine vppon vs,to be an example to vs,of an holy conuerſation: a guide and an eye,to direct vs in the waye of eternall life,Salt,to ſeaſon vs with the fear of God: a builder,to make a Temple of his people, which are liuing ſtones, for God to dwell in for euer: a Warriour to caſt downe the proud imagination of man,as a ſtrong hold and to bring euery thought to the obedience of Chriſt: a prophet,to ſpeake in ſuch ſort,as when the vnbeleeuers, and vnlearned come in before them, they are rebu-

ked and iudged, and ſo the ſecretes of the heart are made manifeſt, by the true repentaunce and faith. For the which, they acknowledge the gift of God, with all ſubmiſſion, & ſay plainly, that God is in them: â skilfull Shepheard to feede God his flock with his Worde. Neceſſary therefore, yea, more neceſſary then foode and cloathing, is the moſte ſacred office of preaching, an ordinary and moſt excellent means of our ſaluation: which eyther to neglect, or to ſeeke for other meanes without it, to obtaine fayth in Chriſt, is to preiudicate the wiſedome of God, and to looke for ſome extraordinarye working, which were to tempt the higheſt, and procure his indignation vpon vs. And to proue the neceſſity of preaching, the Apoſtle PETER affirmeth, that in the Epiſtles of S. PAVL, there are ſundry thinges harde to bee vnderſtoode, which they that are vnlearned & vnſtable, peruert, as they doe all ſcriptures, vnto their owne deſtruction. We therefore ſtande in great neede of that man of God before deſcribed, to open the Scriptures, with the key of knowledge: not only to the enlightening of our vnderſtanding, and confirmation of our memory, but alſo to the reformation

mation of our sinfull life. The trueth wher-
of, the example of the Eunuch, treasurer to
CANDACES Queene of Ethiopia, doth
manifestly approoue; who being brought
vp no doubt, in better maner then we the
common people of the countrey, and deli-
ting to read the holy scriptures, and espec-
ally the prophet ESAY, at what time PHI-
LIP the Euangelist demaunded, whether
he vnderstood what he red, answered di-
rectly, How can I, without I had a guide.
If therefore this noble man aided with bet-
ter helpes then the common sort, made it
an hard thing to vnderstand the Prophet
without an interpreter, how can we the
simple silly people vnderstand it. For reme-
dy whereof, the Lord hauing a prouident
care ouer his Church, hath giuen Pastours
and Doctors for the gathering together of
the Saintes for the worke of the ministerie,
and for the edification of the body of
Christ, till we meete altogether (in the vni-
tie of faith, and knowledge of the sonne of
God) vnto â perfect man, & vnto the mea-
sure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ.
Much more we find in holy Scripture con-
cerning the office of Ministers, tendyng to
shew the excellencie of their function, and

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the wonderfull skill and knowledge that is required at their handes. So that it doeth plainly appeare, that God had a speciall care to prouide an euident and plaine lawe, that no vnskilfull man should be set ouer his flocke, because he is so plentifull in declaring their duetie almost euery where: so that whosoeuer desireth to be fit for such an office, desireth a worthy worke, to whō by good right appertaineth double honor, and of whom it may worthily be sayd with admiration: How beautifull are the feete of them which bring glad tidings of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

Hauing laid downe our petition, and described in some maner a faithful pastour; we craue leaue to shew after what maner we desire that this pastour should exercise that his office among vs simple people, to our better edification. Neither doowe desire this of our selues, but, directed by the worde of God; as it is written by S. PAVL to the Corinthians, saying: I could not speake vnto you as spiritual men, but as vnto carnall, euen as vnto babes in Christ Iesus. I gaue you milke to drinke, and not meate; for ye were not yet able to beare it, neither yet now are ye able; for ye are yet carnall.

carnall. Much more may be ſaid to vs Engliſhmen, Ye are carnall, and therfore haue neede to be fedde with milke, and not with ſtrong meate. This milke we take to be, not onely a familiar kinde of Catechizing, in as ſhort and plaine termes as poſſible may be (which we greatly long after) whereby we are made fit to receiue a more full declaration; as when we haue learned our letters, we come to ſpelling; but alſo a plaine and familiar kinde of handling of ſome portion of ſcripture, by deliuering the doctrine as the text yeeldeth it naturally without any enforcement, which doctrine receiueth an edge by exhortation. Contrary to this practiſe of S. Paule do they who either Catechize not at all, or els do it in ſuch exquiſite maner, that it is made rather ſtrong meate, then milke. Some other take but one word for their text, and afterward runne into the mountaines, that we cannot follow them; not knowing how they went vp, or how they will come downe: whereas, if they had taken a good portion of the text, and had naturally expounded, and pithily applied the ſame; by occaſion of that large text, we ſhould haue remembred a good part of the ſermon long time after; & without

out all contradiction he that will doe vs any good, muſt abaſe himſelfe as lowe as he can, to our capacitie, as S. PAVL in the place before alleaged, & alſo in the 6. to the Romanes doth teſtify, ſaying: I ſpeake after the maner of men, becauſe of the infirmitie of your fleſh. For we countreymen are well content, that they ſpare to ſpeake vnto vs in the Latine, Greeke, & Hebrew tongues, which we vnderſtand not; or to bring forth their Poets, Philoſophers, or Schole-points taken from the liberall Artes, to approoue their matter they haue in handling, wherewith we are not acquainted: For in theſe things many preach themſelues, and not Chriſt Ieſus, and ſtudy to leaue an admiration & fame of their learning behind them, whereat they chiefly ſhoote, rather then a godly edification of the inner man, which is by faith in Chriſt Ieſus. But when by thoſe helpes before named, they haue attained to a fuller vnderſtanding of the ſcriptures, let them (in God his name) in a plaine and ſimple declaration of the truth, with known wordes, ſetting apart the entiſing ſpeach of man his wiſedome, & flouriſhing eloquence of thoſe Corinthian preachers, deliuer vnto vs the ſubſtance of religion,

gion, out of a pure heart, with reuerence as in the ſight of GOD. So ſhall they haue PAVL for an example to imitate, whome FESTVS ſuppoſed, that much learning had made him mad; yet writing to the learned Corinthians, he profeſſed to know nothing amongſt thē, ſaue onely Ieſus Chriſt, and him crucified.

To this plaineneſſe of teaching, there ought to be ioyned a continuaunce in the holy exerciſe of the word, as S. PAVL ſaith to TIMOTHIE: Take heed to thy ſelfe, and to doctrine, and continue therein. And in an other place: Preach the worde, be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon. And for that cauſe, one chiefe propertie of the miniſter is, to be vigilant ouer the flock, which though he carefully performe, yet in many yeeres, we come but to a ſmall meaſure of knowledge, and reformation of life. And no maruell, ſith the Apoſtles of Chriſt, hearing their maſter preach ſo often, and ſo familiarly, by the ſpace of three yeeres and more, yet for all his paines and trauaile in that time, they knew not well the vertue of his death and reſurrection. Yea, we heare ſay, that many painefull preachers both in townes & cities, exerciſing the word three

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or foure times a weeke, yet doe they complaine of the ſmall profiting of the flocke. Then were it requiſit, that double diligẽce were vſed amongſt vs the rude people of the land, whoſe ignorance and dulneſſe to learne, as alſo ſtubburnneſſe to obey, are ſo great, that they are only known vnto God, to our ſelues, and thoſe fewe that haue had familiar conference with vs. And in trueth to ſpeake plainly, we are children in vnderſtanding, and men in malice, and all rude behauiour. For why ſhould we conceale from you the right honourable aſſembly of Parliament, the grieuouſneſſe of our malady, vnto whom we flie as vnto our parents, who onely haue power, next vnder God, to prouide a ſalue for our ſore? Yea, it grieueth vs that we haue ſo long tyme concealed the miſerable eſtate wherein we ſtand, from them who if they had known it to be ſo great, as we do feele it, would ere now haue prouided a remedy to redreſſe it. But touching theſe men, whome we ſo greatlye deſire to haue, in our ſimple iudgement, we thinke it not fit, that any man (were he neuer ſo wiſe & godly) ſhould make choiſe alone of that man, that is to take a greater and more precious charge vpon him, then

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they that haue the moſt coſtly Iewells and treaſures of Princes, committed to their keeping. How requiſite were it, that ſuch â man as ſhould haue the bringing vp & gouernment of the ſonnes and daughters of the glorious king of heauen, (who loued them ſo dearely, that he ſpared not his onely begotten ſonne, to redeeme them with his moſt precious bloud) ſhould rather come into â publike place of trial, as it were into an opẽ Theater, that after publike prayer and faſting, he might be ſeene & viewed of all mẽ, that if the beholders had as many eies as thei faine that Argos had, they ſhuld vſe them all, to ſift & try out that man, whether he were fit both in reſpect of his wiſedome & vnderſtanding of the holy ſcriptures, as honeſty of life & conuerſation, to take that noble charge vpon him. Moreouer, ſeeing we know that there be many ſubtile workers, tranſforming thẽſelues into Angels of light, who ſeeke craftily to creepe in to deuour the flocke: is it not to be feared, that they will more eaſily ſlide in through the hands of one then of many? Yea ſurely, the counſel & aduiſe of mo then one for trial, is thoght needful to be vſed in matters of les importãce. As whẽ any man taketh on him

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the profession of Phisike (whose care is onely to see to the good estate of the body) notwithstanding, that he hath spent many yeeres both in the study of the liberal Arts, as in the secrets of Phisike; yet is he to passe the hands of 4. approoued Doctors of Phisike to be tried, whither he hath profited so much in the study of Phisike, as is requisite for a mã of that profession, least, if he should rashly take vpon him to intermeddle in that Science, without sufficient knowledge in the same, the bodily health of man should sustaine either damage or danger. Shal then the spirituall Phisition that taketh vpon him to cure the maladies of the minde, (which are mo in number, more secret, and more difficult to be cured, and more dangerous if they bee cured) come lesse furnished in the knowledge of his profession then the other? And is it not requisite, for the triall of his knowledge, that the number of skilfull examiners and their diligence, should be multiplied and increased so much the more as the soule doeth excell the body? Therefore seeing we are so prouident, that we can espy the euils that happē to the body by vnskilfull Phisitions, and by good meanes preuent them: why can we not see

3. of Henry the eight, cap. 3.

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the palpable miſchiefs that we ſuffer in our ſoules by vnlearned Curates, and by many skilfull & vigilant eyes exclude them? And this election many we finde to bee agreeable to the ſcriptures; as we reade in the election of Mathias, Acts. 1. of the Deacons Acts 6. Where the apoſtles and the church were aſſembled together about that buſineſſe: and of the election of the elders in euery church. Actes 14. Pavle and Barnabas, and Iohn, Mark with the Church were aſſembled together with faſting and prayer. Likewiſe, Act 16. where it ſeemeth that Pavl choſe Timothie alone, (when they of Lyſtra and Iconium preſented) yet in the firſt epiſtle of S. Pavle wrote vnto Timothie, mention is made, that hee had impoſition of hãds by the Elderſhip, which conſiſteth of many. It appeareth alſo in the ſame epiſtle, that there were many in the election of the church-officers at Epheſus: becauſe S. Pavl exhorteth Timothie, not to bee partaker of the ſinnes of others, that were fellow-chooſers with him, by yeelding, his conſent to the election of any vnworthy officer, but to keep himſelf pure, by denying his conſent, and hindring the election, as much as hee might, which no

doubt is the true ſence of that place. The ſame is prooued, by the epiſtle to TITVS, where PAVL requireth him to ordaine elders in euery city, as he had apointed him: by the which ſaying: TITVS is reſtrained to that order or election, which S. PAVLE had appointed him, and it is to be thought that S. PAVL woulde appoint no other order to be obſerued, thē he himſelf had vſed act. 14 and in the election of TIMOTHIE, which was practiſed by the apoſtles, act. 6. At the leaſte if it were but to keepe vniformitye amōgſt them. And vndoubtedly, if the miniſters of the word had their calling by many good and godly men, indued with gifts ſufficient for the triall of their doctrine and manners, then wee ſhould accept them as the angels of God, euen as Chriſt Ieſus himſelfe, then durſt no ſuch hedge-prieſtes, and caterpillers, as are ſpread ouer the land in great nūber, once thinke to haue any entrance into the church of God to kill ſoules any more: when they ſhold vnderſtand that there were many vigilant watchmen apointed to keep the dore againſt thē. Thē ſhold not they that can thriue in no trade of life, ſuch men as Iob calleth the children of fools, & the ſons of villains, which are more vile

vile then the earthe, haue theire vttermoſte refuge, and reſting place in the miniſtery. But if any man that is without natural affection to vs his poore brethren, ſhoulde giue ſome allowaunce to theſe vnpreaching miniſters, which wee haue: willing vs to contente oure ſelues with them, as our lawfull paſtours. In calling to our remembraunce theſe dumb idolles which oppreſſe vs, they renewe oure former griefe, and make our hearts euen bleede to thinke vpoon them. For who are appoynted to murther God his people, but they? Howe farre are they vnlike theſe miniſters whome before we haue deſcribed? euen as muche as the darkneſſe is to light. For if the worde of God bee the rule of righteouſneſſe, as it is in deede, and theſe men of whome we complaine, are not ſquared thereby; Howe can they auouche that they bee ſent of God? If not of him, you knowe of whome. For if Chriſte had ſente them, as his Embaſſadours, then, no doubt he would haue put his Embaſſage in their mouthes. Or if hee would haue had them occupiers of the talēt of preaching the word, wold he not firſt

haue giuen it them? For how can the iudge of all the world cal men to accounts for the abuſe of that they neuer had? Nay rather; he ſaith to all the Paſtours of his flocke before he ſend them, as he did to EZECHIEL. Eate that thou findeſt, Eate this booke and goe, and ſpeake to the houſe of Iſrael. Neither do we finde in God his booke which you haue deliuered vnto vs, any other miniſters of the word, except thoſe which are called blind guides, ſtarres without light, vnſauory ſalt, good for nothing, no, not for the dunghill, cloudes without water, idoll ſhepheards whom the Lord hath curſed euen from mount Ebal. And certainly when the biſhops went about to lay their handes vpon them, and vnwarily ſayd vnto them, ye haue clothing, let this ruine bee vnder your handes: they ſhould haue ſaid, yea, rather ſworne on that day to the reuerend fathers, ſaying, we can bee no helpers, there is neither bread in our houſes, nor clothing, therefore make vs no gouernours of the people. Or they might haue ſaid euery one of them, as we read in the Prophet ZACHARIE: I am no Prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to be an heardman from my youth vp. O

Eſa. 3. 6, 7.

Zach. 13. 5.

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that they had ben ſo wiſe, ſo to haue done: But, if they themſelues will plead for the alowance of their miniſterie, and ſhew forth themſelues as though they were workmen that need not to be aſhamed, Let thē proue it by their worke as S. Paul doth prooue his Apoſtleſhip to the Corinthians, which was then called into queſtion by the falſe Apoſtles moſt vnworthily; as we doe call their miniſterie into queſtion moſt worthily. He brought not forth vnto them his letters commendatorie from ſome great man; as peraduenture they will ſhew the letters of their Orders: but he willed them to call to remembrance their conuerſiō to Chriſt, and the graces giuen them by his miniſtery in the Goſpel, and that was his epiſtle commendatorie, and the ſeale of his Apoſtleſhip to be red of all men. What thoſe graces were, it is plaine in the 1. Cor. 1. In all things ye are made rich in him, in all vtterance, and all knowledge; ſo that you are not deſtitute of any gift, waiting for the appearing of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. So wee pray you to try theſe men, their congregations, which in ſome places are more then two thouſand ſoules, and ſee their worke: mooue but theſe ſmal queſtions to try their

knowledge, and you ſhall haue the like anſwers for the moſt part. Honeſt mā, are you â ſinner? Yea, the beſt of vs all are ſinners. Haue you ſinned in the 1. com. Thou ſhalt haue none other gods but me? I thāke God my whole truſt is in him. Haue you broken the 3. com. by taking Gods name in vaine? I ſweare as litle as any man, I thank God. Do you not cōmit adultery, or ſteale? No, God forbid, I perceue we ſhal find you no ſinner at length. But what is the puniſhment due for ſinne? As it pleaſeth God. Then God hath not alredy determined of that matter. So it may be. But how ſhall you be ſaued from your ſinnes, tel me that? By my good works, & deeds I hope, & ſom better lerned wil ſay, God is merciful. Through whom is God merciful vnto you? I cānot tel that, for I am not learned. Then I will tel you, God is merciſull through Chriſt. But what was Chriſt? A mā, I trow. And was he no more? Yes, he was more. What more? I told you that I am not learned to anſwer ſuch deepe queſtiōs, I was neuer asked the like before. Are you not fully perſwaded that you ſhall go to heauē? No, for you cannot be certain of that your ſelf, but I hope wel, & mean as wel as the beſt of you ſcripture mē. Behold

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the nakednes of our ſoules, haue pity vpon vs,& help vs to couer our ſhame.But al this time while youreaſon with vs of theſe matters,we thinke our ſelues in a wildernes, or as a fiſh out of the water, & ſo glad as may be to be rid of your cõpany.And ſome will not anſwer at all, but ſhake you of as buſybodies,in great anger, willing you to ſee to your own ſoules,& let theirs alone.So that not aboue 2.or 3.of 100.(we ſuppoſe) of vs country people thorowout the land where theſe blind guides be, can make any better anſwer to the purpoſe, whereby you may probably cõiecture that the ſeed of eternal life is ſowen in our hearts.And the conuerſiõ of theſe few is not wroght by any thing done by theſe ſilly miniſters ; but rather the prouidence of God hath drawn vs into ſome other place by occaſiõ of our calling, where we haue heard the word preched: or it may be, that God doth bleſſe ſome mens bare reading or hearing the ſcripture red,or conferẽce with godly men,by the working of his ſpirit,where al other means faile thẽ. But if queſtion be further made of the practiſe of mortificatiõ of the old mã,&the raiſing of the new man,of the benefits of afflictiõs,of patiẽce,&c. wherof the Corinthiãs

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were not deſtitute by PAVLES miniſtery; we thinke we heare men ſpeake parables, if mention be made of the comming of our Lorde Ieſus, then we tremble. But many of vs, can ſay the beleefe, the Lorde his prayer, and the tenne commaundementes; and yet God knoweth, without vnderſtanding or feeling. Neuertheleſſe, we think our ſelues to be in as good caſe, touching our ſoules health, as the beſt of you all. This is that great perfection whereunto our idol-miniſters haue brought vs. Behold theſe labourers, that neede not to be aſhamed of their worke? Read theſe their Epiſtles to their high commendation. But by this, that we haue ſayd, we think it to be playn ynough, that theſe men entred not in at the doore into the ſheepe-folde, but climed vp another way, and therefore, by the verdict of our ſauiour Chriſt, they are theeues and robbers, whoſe comming tendeth only to ſteale, to kil, and to deſtroy. Firſt, what good can come vnto vs by them, whome the Lorde hath not ſent, and ſanctified to the work of the miniſtery? what good can they do to the building of God his temple, that bring with them no tooles to worke with, but occupy the roome of a Figge tree that

beare

bear no fruit. Secondly, they which do not gather with Chriſt, according to his owne teſtimony, doe ſcatter: but it is manifeſtly known, that theſe men are no gatherers, but to ſathan. Therfore it is euident, that they do vs much harm, but no good at al. Thirdly, how can thoſe be profitable vnto vs, and not rather an intollerable burthen, whom the Lord in his great diſpleaſure hath curſed and laden with many woes, as in Ieremie 23. Woe be vnto the paſtours that deſtroy and ſcatter the ſheepe of my paſture, ſaith the Lord: and after promiſing to ſet ſhepheards ouer them, that ſhould feede them. He ſheweth euidently that they ſcatter and deſtroy, who feed not the people with the wholſom word of life. The like we read in the prophet Ezechiel cap. 34. where it is written, after this manner. Thus ſaith the Lord God vnto the ſhepheardes, Wo be vnto the ſhepheards of Iſrael, that feede themſelues: ſhold not the ſhepherds feed their flocks? Ye eat the fat & cloath ye with the wool, ye kill them that are fed; but ye feede not the ſheepe: the weak haue ye not ſtrengthned, the ſick haue ye not healed, neyther haue ye bound vp the broken, nor brought againe that which was driuen away

away, neither haue ye ſought that which was loſt, but with cruelty and rigour, haue ye ruled ouer them, and they were ſcattered without a ſheapherd, and when they were ſcattered, they were deuoured of all the beaſtes of the feelde &c. How can the ſheepe bee in worſe caſe then to bee in the hands of ſuch ſhepheards as regard them not, but ſcatter them to be deuoured of all the beaſts of the feelde? In the which ſpirituall poueriſhments the wrath of the Lord doth not ſtay it ſelf, but his arm is ſtretched out ſtil to afflict the people of that kingdõe wher ſuch euil ſhepherds be, with al maner of bodily plagues alſo, as war and captiuity, wherof we read, in the Prophet ESAIAS, wher the Lord prouoketh forraigne natiõs to inuade the land of IVDEA, ſaying: All ye beaſts of the feeld come to, & deuour euen all the beaſtes of the Foreſt &c. The reaſon followeth. Their watchmen are all blinde, they haue no knowledge, they are all dumbe Dogges, they cannot barke, they lye, and ſleepe, and delighte in ſleeping. Laſt of all heereby it appeareth that wee are worſe by theſe Sheapheards, then if we had none, becauſe their skill ſeruing them onely to teache vs to ſay by heart, the

Lord

Lord his prayer, the beleefe, and ten commandements, and peraduenture ſome part of the Cathechiſme: Which we know full little what they meane, and to reade the ſcripture vnto vs, which we heare as a ſtory that concerned the people of old time, with out any further applicatiõ therof vnto our ſelues: yet notwithſtãding by this, we think our ſelues to be in as good caſe, and as farre forward in the way of ſaluation as the beſt of them all, that haue continually heard the goſpel preached for the ſpace of theſe 26. yeares. This is the pollicy of Sathan, with the ſhewe of nothing, to make vs beleeue, that we haue al things, & whẽ we are empty, to make vs think we are ful. This is that chainſhot, wherewith he ſlaieth thouſands vpon thouſandes, & as it were, the iawbone of an aſſe; wherwith he doth make heaps vpon heapes, as we read of Sampson, whereas, if we had none at all, very ſhame would compell vs, to go to the places, where preachers are, and by the grace of God, wee ſhoulde heare them, euen the ſecreates of our harts diſcouered and condemned, and the only means to be ſaued, to embrace our ſauiour Chriſt by faith. By whoſe helpe we ſhold take ſuch taſte of the worde of God, that

that we ſhould afterward neuer be in reſt and peace before we had procured a good paſtour to be placed ouer vs. So ſhould not Sathan deceiue vs any more to cauſe vs to ſtay vpon theſe ſilly ſhepeheards, as vpon a broken ſtaffe of reede, vpon the which if a man leane, it will go into his hand & pierce it. But if further reply be made of thoſe that tender our ſaluation but a litle, ſaying, you are ſufficiently prouided of preachyng by your quarterly ſermons. We anſwere, that 4. ſermons in the yere are as inſufficient ordinarily to make vs perfect men in Chriſt Ieſus, (to which end Paſtours and Doctors are giuen vs) as 4. ſtrokes with an axe are vnable to fell downe a mighty oke, or 4. ſhowers of raine of one houres continuãce to moiſten the hard dry earth, and to make it fruitfull all the yeere long. Yea, our children will as ſoone learne the Latin tongue by going to ſchoole 4. houres in a yeere, as we that be children in vnderſtanding the ſcripture, ſhall attaine to a true knowledge and reformation of life fit for a Chriſtian man, by hearing 4. ſermons yeerely: by reaſon, that the one is agreeable to nature, the other quite contrary. What if theſe men which preach theſe quarterly ſermons, be

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be the Paſtours of an other flocke? How can we with a good conſcience take thoſe ſermons from that flocke to which they belong, and depriue them of that which by good right doth appertaine to them? That congregation which ſoweth vnto their Paſtour all his earthly things, will be lothe to be defrauded of the vſe of any of his ſpiritual things; eſpecially, on the Saboth day. And ſurely, if this iniury were offered in matters concerning this life, it would in no maner wiſe be put vp and digeſted amõgſt vs. But admit it were lawful for the paſtors to borow ſo much time of their flocke as to preach theſe quarterly ſermons, yet if we conſider the ſmal profiting of the Apoſtles of Chriſt in a long time, who were often taught and after the beſt maner, by their maſter, and the incredible dulnes & backewardnes of vs countrey people, that are fallen into the laſt and worſt age; and the exceding great inequalitie of our teachers in compariſon of our Sauiour Cſtriſt: it may eaſily moue you to thinke, that 4. ſermons were farr to litle, and that 400. rather were more requiſit (if it were poſſible thei could be attained vnto) to bring vs to the vnitie of faith, & acknowledging of the ſonne of God,

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God, which is the end of the miniſtery, as S. PAVL writeth to the Epheſians. But ſeing we haue the expreſſe wordes of the ſame ſame Apoſtle to TIMOTHIE, willing him, & in him al paſtours to preach the word, & to be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, & to continue therein; as alſo the example of himſelf, which he recommended to the Elders of Epheſus, & conſequently to all Paſtors to be imitated, ſaying: Watch therefore, & remember that by the ſpace of three yeeres, I warned euery man night and day with teares; this controuerſie may ſoone be ended, yea the wofull experience almoſt euery where, which is the ſchoolemaſter of fooles, doth make open proclamation, that theſe 4. ſermons are to ſlender a diet for vs. But if it were graunted (will ſome ſay) that it is fit, yea neceſſary, that euery congregation ſhould haue a painfull preacher or two, if it be greater; which we take to be as clere as the light, and denied of none but of Papiſts and Athiſts: yet were it pity (ſay they) to diſplace theſe vnlearned Curates, and to turne them & their family forth a begging. But were it not a greater pity by farre, to ſee theſe blind guides thẽſelues to fall into the pit of hel, & â multitude of ſouls in the lãd,

that

that are almoſt innumerable to follow thē, there to ſtarue & pine away eternally, being depriued of all foode that ſhould comfort them? Nay, ſeing they did neuer ſweat for the place which they haue inuaded, nor entred in by the dore, but climed vp ſome other way by euil means, & no good faith; & being entred, haue made hauocke of the Lord his flocke, & therefore moſt worthily are called thieues & robbers, by the mekeſt man that euer was: they may thinke themſelues very mercifully delt withal, that they may quietly depart away with bag & baggage, and returne to their old occupations againe, from whence they came, without any further puniſhment. But becauſe it may be thought that they haue committed this ſinne ignorauntly, and that vnder the ſhadow of lawe, and ſeeing that Chriſtian charitie doth extend it ſelfe very farre, we ſuppoſe that ſome litle penſion might very wel be deducted frō the liuing of the BB. of the See where they were ordred & be giuē vnto them: & if that pention would not ſerue for their maintenāce, the reſt might be ſupplied either by their old occupations, or by exerciſing ſom inferior office in the church, and teaching of children. So by this ſparer diet,

diet, then heretofore they haue vſed, and the hearing of the Goſpell preached diligently by a learned man, which had bin before precious vnto them becauſe they had no manifeſt viſion; as it fel out in the dayes of ELIAS, as we read in SAMVEL, they may be brought to bewayle the bloud (whereof they are guilty) of ſo many ſouls, as haue periſhed in their manifold ſinnes and ignoraunce, within their pariſhes, by reaſon they haue not giuen warning from God, out of his word, as he requireth in the prophet EZECHIEL; that if it be poſſible one way, or other, God his wrath might be pacified in true humbling of themſelues; with many teares before the throan of grace, and they waſhed clean from the bloude of all men, by the rich mercies of God in Chriſt Ieſus. Were not this a better way by a thouſand degrees; for theſe men them ſelues, though no regard were had of vs, then to ſuffer them ſtill to ad bloud vnto blod, vntill ſuch time as the Lord his wrath were ſo kindled againſt them, that nothing but certain deſtruction, were to be looked to fall vpon them from the Lord, as we read of the wicked ſonnes of ELIE? Let them therfore depart, & giue place to learned preachers,

chers, if ſome ſacrilegious patrones will ſo permit; for we haue heard, that it hath bin preached at Paules croſſe, that in the two Vniuerſities of Cambridge and Oxford, there are mo then 300. able men fit for the miniſtery, beſide many other in the countrey that cannot enter into any church, or take any charge abroad, except in the firſt ſtep they enter in, they wil commit both ſimony and periury. How ſhal ſathan be cõquered by ſuch men, as in the firſt conflict haue receiued by him ſuch deadly woũds? For euen our plough boyes know it to be a common practiſe almoſt euery where amõgſt patrons, that either they take a great ſumme of mony, or mony worth, as it were a fine, with ſuch ſleighty conueiance, as if they were iuglers, that no man ſhal eſpy thẽ or any law preuent them, or make ſome reſeruation of the tithes and glebeland, as it were a rent, & many times all theſe practiſes be vſed togither, whoſe rauenous teeth, and alſo the paiment of the firſt fruites and tenthes, which the charge of their lawfull family, which the papiſts neuer knew, and alſo their tithes not paid them in ſo large a ſiſe as heretofore hath bene done, hath brought the churchmẽ vnto ſuch an ebbe,

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that after their death their executours doe not bleſſe them, except it be certaine of thē which haue ſundry benefices. The conſideration wherof, hath abaſhed many of vs ſo much, that we haue ſmall regard to maintain our children in learning, in hope of any honeſt preferm̄ēt that way. Yea, we feare â further miſchiefe to fall vpon vs by theſe deuourers of holy things, of the which we hope there is none among you: for we ſee them euery day more diligent to compaſſe ſea and land, to find out IEROBOAM prieſts for vs (for they are the men that wil be content to part Chriſt his coat betwene them) and when they haue found them out, they make them two fold more, the children of the diuell, then themſelues; by cauſing thē for a litle lucre ſake, to betray mens ſoules to the diuell. So that what by theſe cormorant patrones, and IEROBOAM his prieſtes, ſinne and iniquitie is riſen ſo high, that it is now full ſea: Ignoraunce, blaſphemy, and contempt of the Saboth day doth raign in towne and citie: In pride & vanitie, Sathan hath waſted his fruitfull wittes, that he can do no more. In theſe dayes all are become princes and nobles. The tire of women is lighter now, then of the ſtewes heretofore:

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ſo that, if the people of the former tymes ſhould riſe out of their graues, and behold this preſent age, they would ſurely thinke that proude ſtraungers had inuaded and conquered this land. Quarels and ſtrifes in lawe are infinite. Whoredome is made but a ſport. Craft and deceit is euery wher practiſed. Vſury hath made as much friēdſhip betweene man and man, as was betweene CAINE and ABEL. No towne is emptye of the couetous which ioyne houſe to houſe, and land to land, whereby the poore is multiplied in great number. But as concernyng many patrones, the leproſie of ſpoiling of the church, hath ſo pierced their bones and marow ſo deep, that it cannot be waſhed away, with any good law, be it neuer ſo wiſely made: For the Lawyers themſelues confeſſe, that by the helpe of Sathan, ſome men are as cunnyng, to ouerthrowe the meanyng of good lawes, as it were to vndoe PENELOPE her webbe, as other are prouident by the good lawes to preuent miſchiefe. And therefore, the onely way and remedy to cure this cancker, is; to reſtore the preſentations to the Church, to whome by good right they doe belong. Which thing

as it is moſt vndoubted by the worde of God, ſo alſo we heare that the learned are able to prooue it by the ciuill law: wherein it is ſaid, that a priuiledge is fruſtrate and of none effect, when it is abuſed, and that the people and other that had intereſt to preſent, aſſigned their right to the patrones, when they endued the church with landes and other prefermentes, it is plaine: who perſwaded thēſelues that the patron would be careful inough to prouide a worthy mā, who would not ſpare his lands and liuing to maintain him. But now the patrons neither endow the church but ſpoile it, neither are they careful to prouide godly preachers but on the contrary, they labour tooth and naile to bring the caterpillers of Egypt vpō vs. And therefore what right can they pretend to clame any priuiledge? Which ſurely the godly wil not contend for, whē they ſhall ſee that reſtitution thereof tendeth to the glory of God, and the building of his church. Wil ye heare what the papiſts mutter; yea they ſpeake it plainly that we maintaine our hereſies (as they terme them) for aduantage, & not for conſcience; affirming, that thei cannot be perſwaded, that we our ſelues are certified of the trueth of our religion,

gion or receiue any cõfort therby: for then (say they) would ye cherish and maintaine the professors as we do, & not vse them as spongesand spoile them as ye do. O lamentable estate of the church! ô pitiful sight to see her thus lie in the dust. Come Ieremy, & fill thy head with teares, as with a fountaine, cease neither day nor night, but make lamentation for the slaine of the daughter of Sion! Let thine eies cast out riuers of water for the destruction of God his people! ô that some Angel of the Lord would come vnto you, as it wer from Gilgal to Bochim, and record in your eares the mercies of our God, in deliuering you from the captiuitie of Antichrist, as it were from Pharaoh, and in giuing you â fruitful and peaceable land, to whõ the Lord said by his gospell which he deliuered vnto you: I wil neuer breake my couenant with you. You also shal make no couenant with the papists, the idolaters of this land, or any kinde of their vngodlines, but destroy al their idolatry and superstition whatsoeuer. But ye haue not obeied my voyce in retaining idoll ministers, by whom Sathan doth hold his kingdom fast. Wherefore haue ye done this? At the hearing of which words, reproouing the Israe-

lites for making a couenant with the inhabitãts of the land, all the people of the children of Israel lift vp their voices & wept. Of the which weepyng, the place tooke his name Bochim, which in them was a true signe of earnest repentance. And further, to assure them of God his mercies touchyng this fault, as also to binde themselues more straightly to the reformation thereof, they sacrificed there vnto the Lord. The father of our Lord Iesus Christ, of his rich & abũdant mercy, graunt, that in hearing the like sinne, in suffring this idoll ministery amõgst vs, you may draw out of your heds buckets of water of repentance, & ioine your selues with them in the like reformation. But let ESDRAS come in also amongst you, and bewaile a greater matter then vnlawfull mariages. Let him rent his clothes and teare his garments, and pluck of the haire of his hed, and beard, and sit downe astonished, and let all be assembled vnto him that feare the words of the God of Israel, becæuse of the transgressions of this land. Let them fall downe vpon their knees & spread out their handes vnto the Lord God, and say: ô my God, I am confounded and ashamed to lift vp mine eyes vnto thee my God, for our iniqui-

iniquities are increaſed ouer our head, and our treſpaſſes are growen vp vnto the heauens: from the dayes of our fathers haue we bene in great treſpaſſe vnto this day. And now, for a litle ſpace in the raigne of our ſoueraign Lady Elizabeth, grace hath bin ſhewed from the Lord our God, in cauſing a remnaunt to eſcape, in giuing vs a naile in his holy place, that our GOD might lighten our eyes, and giue vs a litle reuiuing in our ſeruitude Papiſticall: For we were bondmen in Queene Mary her dayes, yet our God hath not forſaken vs in our bondage, but hath enclined mercy vnto vs in the ſight of Ieſus Chriſt, to giue vs life, and to erect the houſe of our God, and to giue vs a wall and defence in this land. And now our GOD, what ſhall we ſay: for we haue forſaken thy commandementes which thou haſt commaunded by thy ſeruaunts the Prophets and Apoſtles, ſaying: The land whether ye goe to poſſeſſe, is an vncleane land, full of idolaters, and idoll miniſters: Now therefore ſhall ye erect in GOD his houſe, an holy miniſterie, that ye may bee ſtrong and eate the goodneſſe of the land, and ſo to leaue it for an inheritaunce to your ſonnes for

euer. And though thou diddeſt puniſh vs greeuouſly in Queene MARIE her days, and now in our days, by ſtirring vp the papiſtes to diſturbe the peace of the lande, for the neglect of this holye ordinance, yet haſte thou puniſhed vs leſſe, then our ſinnes haue deſerued. Should we ſtill continue, to breake thy commandementes and permit this idoll miniſterye to remaine among vs: a people of much abhominatiõs, whereby ſinne doth flowe, as a riuer, in the land: wouldeſt thou not be angry towards vs, till thou hadſt conſumed vs, ſo that ther ſhold be no remain or ſcaping: ô Lord God of Iſrael, in ſo doing thou ſhouldſt be iuſt: yet we are reſerued to eſcape, as appeareth this day. Behold we are before thee in our treſpaſſes, our conſcience doth acknowlege the ſame: haue mercy vppon vs, for we cannot ſtand before thee, becauſe of it. O that it woulde pleaſe God to mooue you our moſt dread ſoueraign, after this manner to go into God his houſe again, with ESDRAS and acknowledge this ouerſight with tears! Then would a great aſſembly of all ſorts of people of this land be gathered about you with weeping and great lamentation. Then wold your honorable counſell come about

you

you, as Sechaniah the ſonne of Iehiel came to Esdras, and ſaid, we haue treſpaſſed againſt God, by receiuing a ſtrange miniſtery; yet there is hope concerning this. Now therfore let vs make a couenant with our God and put away this dumb miniſtery, & place in their room a godly preaching miniſtery, according to the counſell of the Lord, and thoſe that feare the commandement of our God, and let it be done according to the law. Ariſe, the matter belongeth vnto thee, we alſo will be with thee. Be of good comfort and do it. But the means how this learned miniſtery may be eſtabliſhed, are beſt known vnto your wiſdomes. But if you will giue vs countrimen leaue to ſhew our opinions with patience. Briefely we think, there muſt be a ſufficient number of workmen, and honeſt prouiſion be made for them, as we read that Solomon, for the building of the materiall temple, found out 183300 able men that were occupied in hewing of ſtone and timber, and carrying of burdēs, which al were maintained at the king his coſt, yet we think that a leſſe number of work-men would ſuffice for the building of this ſpirituall Temple, which notwithſtanding, is farre more glorious then

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SOLOMON his temple. If it be ſayd the ſmall number of skilfull men canne not eaſilye be founde, a lamentable thing to be heard. What ſhoulde we do? but firſt place all thoſe worthy men, that can be found, and erect more Colledges and ſeminaries of true religion, to enlarge the kingdome of Chriſt: as we ſee Antichriſt, whoſe talents are as hard as braſſe, to hold faſt whatſoeuer commeth within them, & whoſe hunger is as inſatiable, as hell, yet doth hee ſpare no coſt to build Seminaries of lyes and hereſies, to aduaunce the kingdome of the Deuill, whō by ſuch means, hath greatly preuayled in this land: Should then the pillers of the kingdome of Chriſt be more ſparing, yea, more colde to prouyde all thinges neceſſary for the Lordes army, to be ſent againſt theſe Idolatoures, with a two edged Sworde in their handes, to execute vengeaunce vppon theſe and correction againſte the people, to caſt downe imaginations, and euery high thing, that is exalted againſt the knowledge of God, and to bring into captiuity euery thought, to the obedience of CHRISTE? God forbid. For, if the enemy hath encreaſed his force, Is it not meete, that we ſhould

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doubt oures? Nowe for the prouiſion of ſuche a number of able men as mighte come out of Colledges and other ſchools of Learning, to take charge vppon them; This Noble Iſelande may not for ſhame complayne, of want: For the Lorde his eyes are vppon this Lande Nighte and Daye, that it is as fruitefull as the Gardene of EDEN, a Parragonne of all the Worlde, and the Store-houſe for other Countryes: The wealth whereof is ſo greate, that menne, and Women can not deuyſe to waſte it vaynelye. Then when the Lorde ſayth that hee hathe neede of mayntaynaunce for his Miniſters; Shall wee ſaye that wee haue it not? In the time of Idolatrye there was more then ſufficiente by farre. Howe then is it embeſeled awaye, that there is not to feede CHRISTE, and too cloath him? Howe canne wee ſaye, that wee loue him? no, not ſo muche as Antichriſte loueth the Deuill: For Antichriſte is bountifull, to mayntayne his ſeruice. If the like liberality were vſed amongeſt vs, without all doubt, a greate number woulde be ſtayed, from paſſing the ſeas to Rome or Rhemes to become Ieſuites.

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What is then to be done? Giue vnto God that which belongeth to God, and vnto CÆSAR that which belongeth vnto CÆSAR. What belongeth to God, that is kept from him? euen that which appertaineth vnto his church, to wit, preſentations and impropriations. That things pertayning to the church, do alſo belong to the Lorde, it appeareth in the prophet MALACHIE, cap 3. Where he him ſelf doth ſeriouſly complayne, ſaying: Will a man ſpoyl his Gods? yet haue ye ſpoiled me. But ye ſay, wherin haue we ſpoiled thee? in tithes & offerings, ye are curſed, with a curſe, for ye haue ſpoiled me, euen this whole nation? Hath not the whole nation of England ſpoyled the Lord in like manner, and rather more: that a work-man his hire is to be found in few places. Surely, this is written for our learning, that we might know that things conſecrated to GOD for the ſeruice of his church belong vnto him for euer: as the tithes which were dedicated to the Lorde, and his church by our fore-fathers with great equity which by no right can be takē away as we read Leui. 27. Nothing ſeperate from commō vſe, that a man doth ſeperate vnto the Lord of all that he hath, (whether

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it be man or beaſt or land of his inheritance may be ſold or redeemed. For euery thing ſeperate from the commō vſe is moſt holy vnto the Lord. The which law, is not ceremoniall but iudiciall: the equity wherof endureth to the church for euer, and the violation of the ſame law hath bene horribly puniſhed in former dais, as we read that Achan who defrauded the Lord of ſiluer & gold conſecrated to his treaſury, was put to death with al his houſin a fearful maner, Nabvchadnezer alſo ſpoiled the temple of the holy veſſels, conſecrated to the Lords ſeruice, which Balthasar alſo abuſed by drinking wine in them with his concubines turning holi things to prophane vſes, whoſe heauy iudgement was not deferred, the like we read of Ananias & Saphira his wife, who ſold a parcell of land, & dedicated the price thereof to God & his church. But whē thei had conſented to keepe part of that which was conſecrated, they wer ſharply rebuked by Peter, and ſodainly ſtriken to death. The like iuſtice can no man eſcape, either in this world, or in the world to come, that cōmiteth the like offence, for the Lord is not partiall in iudgemēt, neither with him is there any reſpect of perſons, but he that ſinneth

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ſhall die the death, except he turn vnto him with true repentance, & reformation of his ſinnes, and aſſuredly the ſacriledge of holy things is committed euen with greedineſſe in this Land. Howe can Chriſte in the laſt day, place theſe men which commit ſacriledge and make the church ſo naked of her owne right hand, and ſay: I was hungry & ye fed me, I was naked and ye clothed me; and not rather thruſt them among the Goats, on the left hand, ſaying, depart from me ye curſed into euerlaſting fire, prepared for the diuell and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye gaue me not mine owne: I was naked and ye parted my garments among you. For whatſoeuer ye did vnto my poore miniſters in defrauding them, ye did to me. Yea let them take heede, leaſt in the day of their death, the Church doe not appeare in their conſciences, as a mighty ſea to ouerwhelm them, and they ſay then: Come yee mountaines, and couer vs, that we may fly from the fearce wrath of the Lord, and not behold his fearfull countenance. For we muſt make reſtitution to the vttermoſt farding. Repent therefore in time, and make reſtitution, as the lawe requireth. If any man by error hath taken, that which was holy to

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the Lorde: Let him reſtore it, and put the fift part to it according to the law. Leui.27. Then ſhall Chriſt his ſacrifice be accepted for him. Which reſtitution, we read that Zacheus practized moſt ſtreightly: as appeareth by his own wordes. If I haue done any man wrong, I will reſtore him foure folde, For repentance, without ſatisfaction if it be in thy power, is no better then plain mocking of God. And to mooue them the more, let them remember, what S. Paule wrighteth to the Corinths. Know ye not that the vniuſt ſhal not inherit the kingdom of God? What greater iniuſtice, then to defraud God of his glory? the miniſters of their right? and the poore people of their euerlaſting life? But we truſt, that if certain, that do neither regard God nor his church, and therefore will not be willing to depart with any thing for the maintenance of a learned Miniſtery, that the good prince Nehemiah accompanied with ſo many worthy men, as are now aſſembled together, will diſapoint that prophane man Tobiiah, of his lodging, in the chāber of the houſe of the Lord, and make it cleane for the Leuites. And this iniury if we feele, to be ſo great, to take that from vs, which we

wold consecrate to the food of our souls,& yet we are vtterly famished,that we think it not only manifest, by the lawe of God,but also by the light of nature;yea,if they them selues,which haue theseimpropriatiõs were deposed vpon their oth, by their superiors, whether in their cõsciẽces, they wrong the Church or no? they would first make many excuses.But if they were vrged with an oth, surely they wold lay their handes vpõ their mouth,& craue pardõ. For the light of nature may be couered, yet it cãnot be vtterly extinguished. Which light of nature shined most clearly in king Pharao, whõ the great famin of the land, hauing brogh̃t all the lãd of the people, was so far off from seeking of the grounde belonging to the priestes,that to preserue it,of his bountifulnesse he gaue them,an ordinary alowance.If this heathen king had such a conscience, to preserue the state of his superstitious priestes, by releeuing them in the time of extremity, should Christian estates make lesse conscience, to maintaine the true seruants of God, which shewe vnto vs the way of saluation in the time of peace and prosperity. We pray you (right honourable) to spare vs to speak a little more: for we pleade for the saluation of

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our ſouls. It ſeemeth vnto vs that Chriſt the grand captain of the tribe of Iuda, as one awaken out of ſleepe, and as a ſtrong man after wine, doth now offer him ſelfe to ſmite his & our enimies on the hinder parts, and to put them to a perpetual ſhame, requiring of you a number of expert ſouldiers, the maintenaunce for them, which are rights & roialties of his kingdom, & therefore iuſtly we cannot deny him. But if the patrone ſay that he will not loſe his patronage, for then he ſhould forgo his pillage, nor the impropriatary wil diminiſh any of his impropriation for the ſeruice of this war (of which diſpoſition we hope that ther is none among you) but that rather they woulde intreate Chriſt to depart the country as the Gergeſits did for the loſſe of their ſwine: or more ſpitefully repell him as the phariſeis, Who ſayd depart hence, or Herodes wil kil thee. Might he not conceiue ſuch griefe and indignation againſt vs vpon this repulſe, who came to deliuer vs frō the greateſt bondage and ſlauery in the world, & to enfranchiſe vs as the citizens of his kingdom the baſeſt of whom are Nobles and Princes? Might not this vnkinde acte (ſay wee) ſo much kyndle his diſpleaſure towardes vs, that

he might be mooued to retire back with all his bleſſings, and turne them into plagues, againſt ſuch an vnkind people? what iniury then ſhould he offer vs? Surely none at all. But to diſcend to ſome particuler example of want of maintenance, as where a church is endowed with half that prouiſion which is requiſit to maintain a preacher, by reaſon of the impropriation, as it falleth oût in many churches of this land, which iniury was done by Antichriſt in the night, and now reſtitution might be made in the day: Yea, put the caſe that the church is not endowed with value of 20. markes (as exceeding many churches haue leſſe) how canne we think that á learned man that hath ſpent many years in good letters, and in the holy ſcriptures, will ſeat him ſelf there, almoſt to famiſh him ſelf, & not rather to employ his labour to the teaching of children? Then by meanes of this impropriation, ſuch a cleark as is correſpondent to the liuing ſhal be placed there, a man that can bring no glad tidings, and to be plain an idoll ſheapheard: whereby of neceſſity it muſt fall out in that congregation, that HAGAR ſhall be fruitfull in bringing foorth bond-men and ſlaues vnto Sathan, and SARAH altogether barren

barren. How then can that impropietory ſeeing this, eate ſauourly thoſe holy things heretofore conſecrated to the ſauing of ſouls without ſalt tears trickling down his cheeks (except his hart be as hard as braſſe) knowing that he is the mā alone, that doth ſhut the gate againſt the preacher, and conſequētly defraud God of his honor in that place, and kil the ſouls of a multitude of his poore neighbours, that would liue and not periſh. And this ſlaughter of ſoules likely to be continued thorow all poſterities, except reſtitution be made thereof to giue entertainment to a preacher. And the which is more lamentable to be knowne, how many hirelings for fiue or ſixe poundes be in diners Congregations in this Lande, eſpecially in the North partes, where there is two or three thouſande ſoules of all ſortes of people both olde and young, that come to one Church to bee taught: where the poore ſilly man is as one that hath not filled his belly in many Weekes before, or lately come out of Pryſon, with a ſharpe face, both pale and white, who hath leſſe ſpirituall food to feed the people that flock about him, then he hath bodily nouriſhmēt to fill their bellies: ſo that in ſuch a popu-

lous congregation, ther be 3. or 4. that are able to giue an account of their faith, it is very much, and yet that worke is wrought by some extraordinary hand of God, & not to be imputed to the seely body. And thus it falleth out in many places where there bee farmers to her maiesty of impropriations that as they are careles for the peoples souls & their owne, the like regard haue they to maintain the building of the chācels, which lye ruinous in sundry places, quite contrary to her maiesties pleasure, & the good peniworth they haue at her gratious handes. These & other thinges cause vs to remēber the daies of HELI; wherin ther was no manifest vision. For the 2. sons of HELY, OPHNY & PHINIAS who knewe not the Lorde were wicked men also, caused the childrēof Israel to abhor the offerings of the Lord, & the seruice of their God. By whose meanes the people trespassed grieuously against the Lord in negligence, or rather contempt of comming to the tabernacle to worship the Lord according to the law. Of which dishonor of God, HELY being informed that his sons were the occasion thereof, yet did not reform & redresse that great mischief, according to that authority & power, which hee had being cheefe iudge & high priest of the

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people,but only gaue thē gētle admonitiō; wheras their fault & offēce deſerued rather to bee puniſhed with death. For whoſe remiſnes or rather negligence to reform ſuch a waighty matter,the Lord threatned ſuch a grieuous plague & deſtructiō to fal vpō him & vpō his houſe, which was truly executed as the remēbrance therof doth make ears to tingle. So the contempt & corruptiō of the worſhip of God, remaining vnreformed,at laſt it came to paſſe, the ſins of the prieſts & of the people were grieuouſly puniſhed by a gret ſlaughter,which they ſuſtained of the philiſtims,& the ark of the Lord taken away frō the midſt of them & deliuered into the hāds of their enimies. In ſteed of Ophny & Phineas, we haue a ſwarme & multitude of miniſters that neither in ignoraunce of the Lord,nor in lewd behauior are inferiour to them. By whoſe ignorāce & wickednes the admiratiō of the word & ſacramēts vpō the ſaboth day is by thē greatly prophaned, & of the people grieuouſly contēned. Which prophanatiō of that ſacred day, if it ſhould not be reformed, it were to bee feared that by theſe idol miniſters & we the people offending together with them likewiſe,ſhold fal into the hāds of our enimies the papiſts, & the word of God taken from vs,which is more

more deare and precious vnto vs then was the arke of the couenant vnto the Israelits. But we trust that these euils shall not come vpon vs, because that for the redres of this hainous corruption of the seruice of God, we make our complaint vnto thē that haue equal authoritie with HELY, & greater zele to aduance the honor of God, and to wipe away the deformities of his church; whose hearts do trēble at the words of the Lord, who as we are perswaded wil not be pertakers with HELY in his sins, lest they should also be pertakers with him in his terrible punishments. Therfore sith so many thousandes of vs be in such a streite by meanes hereof, not possible for vs by any meanes we can espy either now or hereafter to be deliuered without your gratious & mighty helping hands: haue pity vpon vs right honorable assembly, & let our soules be pretious in your sight. Let vs not die that euerlasting death like fooles in Israel, but so worke in this Parliament, that you may say vnto the people of the whole lande: Wee take you to record this day, that wee are pure from the bloud of al men, for we haue kept nothing backe, but haue established al such lawes as are necessary for the publishing

ſhing of all the counſels of God vnto you his people. For al the whole land is at your commandement both of body and goods (with the conſent of our moſt gratious ſoueraign, who is full of mercy and compaſſion) to do as by law you ſhal preſcribe thē. And aſſuredly (right honourable) it were better for vs by farre (if no other remedie could be had) to liue with bread and water in the wilderneſſe with the Iſraelites all the dayes of our miſerable life, with the plentiful preaching of the word of God, then to haue our welfare (which we acknowledge to be great) a thouſands time doubled with this great famiſhment of the worde, which we endure in the moſt places of this land: for then our miſery after a ſmal time would end in felicitie: where as now our momētary pleaſure wil ſhortly be turned into weping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth, except the Lord come downe from heauen to viſit vs by your miniſtery. We pray you therfore moſt pitifully (right honourable) that that voice may no more be heard amongſt vs. The Lordes houſe cannot be built in many places within this land for want of prouiſion: for that doth kil our hearts altogether, as if you ſhould ſay vnto vs: There

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is no remedy but you muſt needes die in your ſinnes and ignorance, the ſecond and euerlaſting death. O moſt doleful voice, able to breake the Adamant, & to reſolue it into teares; which terrible voice the Lord of his infinite mercy turne farre away from vs. But vndoubtedly ſo godly and religious an aſſembly, the faire flowers of this land, will neuer ſpeake ſo hardly vnto vs; but (we hope) the contrary ſaying. This houſe may be built in thoſe deſolate places, and with Gods helpe and our ſoueraignes it ſhall be built, & therefore poore people be of good comfort. Otherwiſe you ſhould beare greater blame then the poore Iewes that came out captiuity from Babilon, & differred the building of the materiall temple, excuſing the matter, that it was not yet time to build it; and neuer ſaid, that by reaſon of their great pouerty & multitude of their enemies that it could not be built at all. Thus right honourable, we haue bewraied our griefe, made our petition known, declared the impediments of a lerned miniſtery, & ſhewed that an honeſt maintenãce is neceſſarily required: Looke vpon vs; lift vp your eies & behold a great multitude gathered about you, which are in the wildernes & haue nothing

thing to eate. Be moued with compassiō towardes vs, for we are as sheepe wanting a shepheard. We are hungry & come frō far; we come vnto you as children vnto the parents and aske bread, we trust you will not giue vs a stone; we craue a fish, will you in steade of a fish giue vs a serpent? we desire to haue an egge; surely you wil not giue vs a scorpion. O let vs liue and not die! & let not that lamentable weeping and howling be heard among vs in the countrey, which sometime was heard in Ramah. Let vs not bewaile the spirituall death of our children & posteritie, as Rachel wept for the bodily death of her children who could not be comforted, becausе they were not. But let the siluer trump of the Lord sound the law in our eares, to the casting down of the old man, and the gospel to the raising vp of the new mā: Let the Lords lights be placed in our temples, & then shal it be fulfilled again which was spokē by the Prophet. The people which sate in darknes, saw a great light; & to thē which sate in the regiō & shadow of death, light is risen vp. And therefore we humbly beseech you right honourable to stir vp you tender affections towardes such a multitude of vs simple people that are in this

this land fleeting in the ſea of ſinne and ignorance, and now vpon ſight of comfort, making an outcry for the ſafety of our life. That it would pleaſe you to reach foorth your right hand of mercy,& by your godly wiſdomes to eſtabliſh the means of our deliuerance, for we are in your handes either to ſaue or ſpil. And therfore,if there ſhould be ſome of you that would not further to the vttermoſt this the weightieſt cauſe of a thouſand, concerning not onely our ſaluation, but more the glory of Chriſt. Howe could theſe men proteſt that he loued him, ſeing he hath ſet ouer the triall of his loue to the care of the feeding of his flocke? As he hath manifeſtly declared in the perſon of PETER,ſaying: Loueſt thou me; feede my ſheepe,feede my lambes. And though you feede them not in your owne perſons; yet ye feede them in procuring them to be fedde: for the which cauſe ye are called by the Lord, the Paſtours and ſhepeheards of the people. Moreouer, if theſe men ſhould haue any ſuite to the father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt,for any thing wherof they ſhold ſtand in need; how could they vſe Chriſt as a mediatour and aduocate,to bring their matters to good effect, if they ſhould neg-

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leſt ſuch a weightie cauſe of his, which he deſireth ſo earneſtly to be brought to paſſe, as appeareth when he ſaith: Firſt, ſeeke the kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſſe thereof, &c. Which is chiefly performed by a learned miniſterie, & not rather be afraid to heare his voice. They that honour me, will I honor, and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be deſpiſed. But be it farre from vs to think any thing but good of ſo honorable aſſembly: for we hope that our mouth ſhall bee filled with laughter, & our tong with ioy, ſaying: The Lord hath done great things for vs, wherof we may reioyce. When we remember your pitifull inclination vppon complaint made, to redreſſe all maner of, yea, ſmalleſt iniuries touchyng this lyfe. How ſhold we now doubt to be ſent empty away, when we come for matters concerning euerlaſting life. We come therfore vnto you in great bitterneſſe of our ſoules, not able to expreſſe halfe the grief we feele for the death of our ſonnes & daughters, as the Sunamite came to Elizeus for the bodily death of her ſonne, praying you to ſend Elizeus and the ſonnes of the Prophets, to ſpred themſelues vpon vs, and vpon our childrē, to breathe into vs the word

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of life, and to make prayers and ſupplications to God for vs; ſo by litle there is hope that we ſhal be reuiued again into a ſpirituall life: for ſurely GEHEZY by laying on vs ELIZEVS his ſtaffe, we meane theſe hirelings, by reading to vs their Homelies, can do vs no good. For notwithſtanding this ſtaffe GEHEZY may returne anſwere, that we can neither ſpeake nor heare, which be euident tokens of want of life. We beſeech you in Chriſt his name to take our ſupplication as the man of Macedonia, which appeared vnto PAVL in a viſion, praying you to ſend preachers into our country to help vs, and in ſo doing be you wel aſſured that you paſſe not the bounds of your vocatiō. Oh, that you were caried in a viſion into ſome great high mountaine, and could behold the huge army of people of this land ſpiritually ſlaine of Sathan more cruelly & pitifully then euer was ſlaine, as we ſuppoſe in the greateſt battel that euer was ſince the creation of this world. Then would you ſhed teares aboundantly with our Sauiour Chriſt, who ſtanding vpon mount Oliuet, beheld that ſtubburne city of Ieruſalem & wept for them, becauſe thei refuſed the doctrine of ſaluation then offered them. But

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our caſe is to bee bewailed and pitied, becauſe the doctrine of ſaluation is not offred vs by the way of preaching, in ſo many ſeueral congregations, as hunger and thirſt after it. And therefore hearken what Bethſheba ſaith to euery one of you. Open thy mouth for the dumbe, in the cauſe of al the children of deſtruction, ſo ſhall you be able to ſay with Iob to your vnſpeakeable comfort after this maner. When the eare heard me, it bleſſed me, and when the eye ſaw me, it gaue witneſſe to me, for I deliuered the poore that cried, and the fatherleſſe, & him that had none to helpe him. The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came vpō me, and I cauſed the widowes heart to reioyce: I brake alſo the iawes of the vnrighteous, & pluckt the praie out of his teeth. Now then there is no time of ſilence, your vocation will not ſuffer it, but that euery one of you without exceptiō, all excuſes ſet apart, is to extend his voice, wit, authoritie & credit to the vttermoſt degree in the cauſe of Chriſt & his church, pleding it (if need ſo require) ſo zealouſly vntil you ſweat & faint withal, ſeeing that in your cauſe Chriſt refuſed not to ſweat drops of bloud. But as the Lord is kind to thoſe that deale kindly with him:

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ſo his diſpleaſure is death, if he being elected or contemned. Know him therfore and his cauſe, that hee may know you as his friends in the day of his glory. And remember that Chriſt that maketh this requeſt for a learned miniſtery, (which by his authority he might command, but rather thorough loue he entreateth you by vs) is not more vile and contemptible, but glorious ſitting on the right hand of his father, and therefore is able, and will requite this kindneſſe done to him ſeuen fold into your boſome: yea, the Lord will account it to be kindneſſe, although in all right and conſcience, it is an homage moſt iuſtly appertaining to his roialty, by reaſon that we hold of him, al that euer we haue in Capite. And though you be willing to perform this ſeruice, yet let vs put you in remembrãce that Sathan will withſtand you, with all his malice and power, who is the prince of this worlde, and therefore will not ſuffice himſelfe to be throwne out of his kingdome, as appeareth in the deliuerance of the childrẽ of Iſrael, from vnder the hand of Pharaoh in reedifiyng of the temple, and publiſhing of the Goſpell, in the primatiue Church: ſo at this preſent day, he is not altered, either

in myght or malice, that he will be content to reſigne his kingdome ouer vnto Chriſt; but as then, ſo now with all ſpeede wyll he muſter his men of warre againſt thoſe that attempt to the aboliſhing of his kingdome. Then we are to know, that as no victory is gotten without ſtrife, much leſſe noble victory without contention in the higheſt degree: For it is to be feared, that the diuell, the fleſh and the world, will all oppoſe thēſelues againſt you, which notwithſtandyng beyng atchieued, is farre more glorious in the high court of heauen, thē the conqueſt of ten mighty kingdoms made tributary & vaſſals vnto this land. This therefore is a worke worth the trial of your ſtrēgth & magnanimitie, ioyned with the greateſt honor that may be. So that if you preuayle (right honorable) as we truſt your enemies ſhall fall downe before you, otherwyſe we could ſee no ende of our griefe and ſorow, thē no doubt in the iudgement of all wiſe mē, you ſhall be counted comparable with the worthies of the world: yea, farre paſſing them in all true honour and glory. And ſeyng we haue begun to ſpeake to the right honourable aſſembly, beyng but the baſe people of the land: Let it not diſpleaſe you that wee

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ſpeake yet a litle more: But if any thing ſhal eſcape our penne vnfit to be ſpoken by vs to ſo high and honourable a courte of Parliament, we moſt humbly beſeech you vpon our knees by the price of the death and paſſion of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and by his glorious commyng to iudgement for our euerlaſtyng deliueraunce, to pardon vs, imputing it eyther to the griefe and bitternes of our ſoules, which cauſed IOB to vtter ſome fooliſh wordes; or to the rudeneſſe of our education, whereby in woordes and termes we may fayle againſt our will. For our purpoſe is (God knoweth) not to hinder our ſuite by offending any, but by a plaine and pitiful manifeſtation of the truth to winne the fauor of you all in this weighty and long deſirous petition, which concerneth the ſaluation of our ſoules. But to the matter. We haue heard it ſpokē by wiſe men, and it ſinketh deeply into our minds, that if euery one of you were in pollicie comparable to ACHITOPHEL the Gilonite, whoſe aduiſe for the common welth in the dayes of DAVID, was taken as an oracle of God, yet if you ſhould deuiſe many ſtrong lawes for the preſeruation of her maieſties perſon (whom the Lord bleſſe for euer)

euer) the peace and prosperitie of this land, and the subuersion of our enemies the Papists and Iesuites, & passe ouer this law for a learned ministery (by planting whereof we are sure to haue a perpetuall league of amitie with the Father, the Sonne, the holy Ghost and mighty angels of heauen, who wil be vnto vs a strong wall of defence, thē that wherewith Babylon was enuironed, which was very strong as the learned say: For if God be on our side, who can bee against vs.) Then (say they) that those good lawes would be as weake and fraile to bind fast the head strong papists and Iesuites, as were the 7. greene withs neuer dried, and the new ropes neuer occupied able to bind mighty Samson. But being ioyned with that principal lawe, they will be as sharpe as a rasor to cut them cleane of. But as in the greatest mischiefs viz. by wasting by fire & water, as also by the inuasion of the enemy, the Prouerbe hath place, Delay doth make the danger greater: so especially it holdeth in the inuasion of the greatest enemy of all mankinde, who hath already taken many townes and castles in this land, shewing all kind of tiranny wheresoeuer he commeth. Therefore as when the bodily enemies

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enter the land to waſte and deſtroy the care full magiſtrates, ſet the beacons on fire, whereby with all ſpeede they leuy power agaynſt the enemy, leaſt by ſuffrance & daily victories, he ſhould make himſelf ſo ſtrong, that afterwards he were not able to bee driuen out of the countrey. So the like expedition or rather greater, were to be vſed in gathering an army of woorthy ſouldiours to encounter Sathan before he enlarge himſelfe in the kingdome of darkenes by means of theſe Ieſuites, leaſt as we haue ſeene with our eyes in the dayes of Queene MARY, it might fal out by the iuſt iudgement of God for our ſinnes, that by tract of time he might poſſeſſe the whole kingdome, as the foreſayd Ieſuites, his faythfull ſeruauntes, doe endeuour to bryng to paſſe. And therfore, as you loue the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and hys Church, which is as tender vnto hym, as the apple of his eye, in the preparation of his warrefare, deale not ſparingly or niggardly with hym, but honour hym with your ſubſtaunce as hee requireth, who hath beene ſo riche and bountifull towardes you not onely in the treaſures of the kyngdome of Heauen, but alſo in the bleſſinges of this preſent lyfe. So that the

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Lorde hath not set you belowe, but hath placed you on high: And if that whiche hee hath done for you bee too little, hee will yet multiply his graces vppon you, vntill you runne ouer. O remember and forget not that seeing Christ the Sonne of the liuing God, equall with his Father, abounding in loue towards you, did cast aside all honor and glory, and made him self of no reputation, by taking vpon him the forme of a seruant: yea, he became a worme and no man: a very abiect of the people, to raise from the dust, and to lifte you oute of the dung, to cause you to sit with princes of his people in the heauenly places in Christ Iesus: he also became pore, not hauing wher-vpon to lay his hed, to make you to aboūd in those moste excellent riches, which the eye hath not seene, nor the eare hath not heard, neyther haue they entred into the hearte of any carnall man. Ought you not with like recompence of loue towards him to lay your honor and riches at his feete to couer the shame and nakednesse of his desolate Church? if ye protest in worde that loue him, & that yee are desirous to see the Church his spouse in her glorious beauty, arrayed in robes of needle worke: yea, clad

with a veſture of Gold of Ophire,& yet wil not deſcend one ſtep downeward, or abaſe your ſelfe one whit, nor open youre purſes to contribute releefe, euen to ſuſtaine her neceſſities,but keeping backe her ancient reuenewes,wherewith heeretofore ſhe was furniſhed to all neceſſary vſes: how can this fayned loue eſcape the ſharp cenſure of the apoſtle IAMES, who ſayth, if a brother or a ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſaye vnto them, departe in peace, warme your ſelues and fill your bellies, notwithſtanding yee giue them not thoſe things,which are needeful to the body,what helpeth it,but we are fully perſuaded that theſe rich mercies of Ieſus Chriſte cannot lye hid and reſt in the heart of anye man liuing,but that they wil kindle a flame of burning loue which will ſhewe it ſelfe bountifull and liberall to the aduancement of his Church and kingdome. And further whereas it hath beene prouided by a good ſtatute,that a freedome from paymente of tythes for a certaine time ſhould be graunted to them that doe conuert barren and waſte grounde into tillage, to giue them a greater encouragement to take the toyle in hand;& that ye haue likewiſe bin careful to

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prouide for the tuing of Marſhes, that haue bene ouerflowen & ſurrownded with water: oughte not then a farre greater care and diligence be vſed that a wiſe and ſure Lawe mighte bee eſtabliſhed to bring the Lordes Feelde into Tillage whiche lyeth waſte and barren of the fruites of righteouſneſſe, and full of thornes and bryers fit for nothing but for the fire, and is likewiſe drowned with the flowds of ſinne and ignoraunce, as it is pittifullye to bee ſeene in the greateſt parte of this Lande: whiche Lawe if it ſhoulde bee neglected, ſeeing it concerneth peace and proſperitye of oure ſoules for euer, ſhoulde not iuſt occaſion bee giuen to take vppe this Prouerbe agaynſte you? They haue ſtrayned a Gnatte and ſwallowed a Camell: but wee truſt that the Lorde in his mercye will looke vpon vs, and ſtir vp in the hearts of ſo graue Wiſe, and Godlye a Senate, ſuche a care and pitty ouer vs, that none of the euilles which we feare ſhall fall vpon vs. For as we wee reade that when DAVID had built him ſelfe an houſe in Ieruſalem, yet ſwore hee vnto the Lorde, and vowed to the mighty God of IAACOB, ſaying, I will not enter into the Tabernacle of myne

house,nor comevpon my pallet or bed,nor suffer mine eyes to sleepe, nor mine eyelids to slumber,vntill I finde out a place for the Lord,an habitatiō for the mighty God of IAACOB.So if you all as one man,in like godly zeale with DAVID, should sweare & vowe vnto the Lorde that you woulde not not return vnto those fayre houses,wherewith the Lorde hath blessed you, to take your comfort, and recreation therin, vntill such time,as you haue prouided and procured, not that the Arke of the Lorde,but that the Gospell of Iesus Christ, which is a more sure token of his presence,should bee brought into his Temple, and placed betweene the Cherubins, which thing is perfourmed when the Gospell is committed to a faythfull Ministerye of the Lorde, to whome al the people may resort,in doubtfull causes to aske Counsell of God. But contrariwise, nothing lesse is doone when the Gospell of reconcilliation is committed into handes of a dumb & idoll ministery, who can neyther open the booke nor shut it:neither by the authority thereof can eyther binde or loose. Who are to bee admonished not to medle with that sacred booke as publike persons, least the Lorde

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make a breach into them as he did into Vzza. Assuredly in this youre seruice of the Lord, ye should do a work worthy of al posterities to be remembred: so shoulde it appeare that ye are not onelye carefull for the Churche in recommending her good estate by prayer vnto the Lord: saying, peace be within thy walles, and prosperity within thy pallaces: for my brethren and neyghbors sakes, I will wish thee now prosperity, but also by deedes, when ye perfourme the same. As it is written, because of the house of the Lorde our God, I will procure thy wealth. Consider also that it was in the hart of David, to build a temple vnto the Lord but because hee was occupied in warres against the enimies of the lord, the building of that house was committed vnto his Son Solomon: To whome the Lord promised peace from his enimies on euery side: so he broughte the worke, to perfection in the fourth yeare of his raigne. Shoulde we not thinke, that seeing the Lorde hath blessed vs with the peace of Solomon in the time of the Gospell for the space of twenty seuen yeares, that it had beene our duetye with like diligence and speede, to haue set vp the Spirituall Temple of the Lorde in a

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glorious beauty, ſo that hardly any default or blemiſh could by this time haue bene eſpied in the ſame: yea, hathe not the Lorde ſhewed himſelf angry againſt the whol lād, and thretned a grieuous puniſhmēt againſt it when he hath at ſundry times offred danger vnto her maieſty, by the ſons of Beliall, as though he would quench the light of Iſrael: yet the Lord with great patience hath had mercy, not only on her, but alſo on vs, ſtill waiting, if now at the laſt, we wil reform and amend ſuch grieuous ruin amongſt vs. And we beſeech you to caſt your eies from Dan to Berſheba, and ſee if there be any ſin more deteſtable and odious in the ſight of the Lord that raigneth in this land, then the permiſſion of this idoll miniſtery: whereby the people periſh without number, & God is defrauded of his honor. And if any man be wilfully ignorant in theſe things, let him be ignorant ſtill, for the Lorde hath reuealed it vnto babes, yet if any man will nowe commend the ſtate of the Church compared with that time wherein the palpable darkneſſe of Ægypt couered the land (peraduenture to ſtay the proceedinges of the godly minded) we acknowledge it with all thankeſgiuing vnto God, to be excellent &

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ſingular. But if we compare our Church by that which the Lord requireth in his word, and we by duty are bound to performe vnder a great penalty layd vpon vs, which the long peace and quietneſſe of this Lande might haue made eaſy to be perfourmed & the examples of the other countries haue prouoked forward, we ſhall find the church to be in great weaknes and deſolation: So that we haue great cauſe of lamentation to ſee her thus lye in the duſt. For wee read in the Prophet Amos, that the Lord brought a greeuous plague vpō the childrē of Iſrael, which ought to haue cauſed them to return vnto the Lord, by withholding the rain frō the earth, ſo that it rained vpon one city & not vpō another, one peece was rained vpō & the peece whervpon it rained not, withered: ſo 2. or 3. cities wandered vnto one city to drink Water, but they were not ſatisfied: hath not this plague twiſe doubled, fallen vppon vs cauſe vs to turne vnto the the Lorde, ſeeing hee hath reſtrained the dewe of his Worde, euen the Water of life, from falling vppon manye Townes of the Countrye, ſo that tenne or twelue of them ſhoulde bee compelled to wander vnto one Towne in ſundrye places

of

of this lande, if they had that godly desire and thirst of the worde which is required: yet peraduenture they should not be satisfied in that place. Then seing that the hand of the Lorde lyeth so grieuously vppon vs, ought we not to humble our selues in deep repentance with many tears, that the fierce wrath of the Lord may be turned away frō vs, least he adde plague vnto plague vntill we bee all consumed from the face of the earth. But if it bee further prouided that hereafter men shall bee admitted into the ministery, except those which are able to preach the worde of God, and that in the meane tyme we shall be contented to suffer those idoll ministers which are already entred into the flocke, to weare out their miserable days amongst vs, then this mischief perchaunce would driue vs to these extremities, eyther to wishe that we had not as yet bene borne in the world, or els that some vntimely death sodainly fall vppon these idols, least the most part of vs should be plunged in the deepe pit of hell, before their cursed dayes were ended. And therefore the occasion of these vnnatural desires ought not to be enforced vpon vs, neither is there the like reason to make prouision in the

the matters of ſaluation onely, agaynſt the euils and miſchiefes which may happen after that tyme, as it is conueniently done in the ciuil cauſes appertaining to this preſent life, for two waightie reaſons that may bee alleaged. Firſt, in ciuil matters, the euils and diſcommodities which are paſt, are ſuch, as are intollerable, and may be ſuffred, & time will weare them away. Secondly, the peace of the publique wealth is preferred, and no man hath cauſe to complaine that any right is taken from him, but it is farre otherwyſe in this cauſe that concerneth the kingdom of heauen: for this miſchieuous euill of a blind miniſtery, is euery waies intollerable, for it is written: If the blind lead the blind, they ſhal both fall into the ditch, out of the which they can neuer riſe agayne, where there is weepyng, wayling and gnaſhyng of teeth for euer. For who is able to giue a rāſome to redeeme their ſoules out of hell, & no length of tyme doeth weare away their miſery, but rather doth increaſe and multiply the anguiſh of their ſouls, neither is our peace diſturbed by remedying theſe euils that are paſt. For how can there be peace otherwiſe eſtabliſhed before that this wickednes as it were of A C A N that troubleth

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all Israel be taken away from amongest vs: And these blind guides haue lest of al cause to complaine of iniury offred them, for by remoouing them out of their places, they should receiue the greatest benefite that could happen vnto them: for they should bee forced to cease from murdering Gods people any more, and if it were possible be brought to repentance for the giltinesse of that bloud which they haue shed vpon the earth, that their soules might bee saued in that great day when the Lord shall come to iudgement: among which persons (with your patience) the non residents are to bee numbred. And therfore we pray you right honorable in the tender mercies of Christ Iesus, to redresse these euils that do presently hang vpon vs and oppresse vs with intollerable bondage and slauery, no, not by the way of imagination any way suffrable. And looke round about you, and take for example to imitate, so many as haue bin zealous for the house of God, and liberall toward the maintenance thereof. First, set God him selfe before your eyes, who in mount Sinai prouided a sufficient portion to be giuen to the Leuites his ministers to attend vppon holy things. Remember that the Israelites

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in their poore eſtate in the wildernes, gaue voluntarily more then inough, to the erectyng of the Tabernacle and furniture thereof. But to paſſe ouer many examples which might bee ſet before your eyes, let not Ezechias, Iosias, Nehemias, and the Princes of the people that bee vnder them be cleane forgotten. Yea, Cyrvs an Heathen king, and other Kinges of Perſia, were bountifull to the Temple of the Lorde. Of all which worthy men, the memory will euer flouriſh and neuer dye. But eſpecially, we beſeech our gracious and noble Princeſſe, to match her ſelfe with David the chiefeſt woorthy of the world, and not onely conſecrate the moſt iuſt ſpoiles of her enemies, but alſo giue bountifully of her owne peculiar treaſure to the mainteuaunce of the houſe of GOD after his example, and takyng vppon her his perſone, to come into this honourable aſſemblie of Parliament, and ſaye vnto them: This ſpirituall Temple is a great and mightye woorke, For this houſe is not for manne, but for GOD; Now I haue prepared with all my power for the houſe of my God: gold for veſſels of golde, and ſiluer for veſſelles of ſiluer, and

and brasse for thinges of brasse, yron for thinges of yron, and Wood for thinges of Wood, and onix stones and stones to bee set, and carbuncle stones, and of diuers colours, and all precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. Moreouer, because I haue delight in the house of my GOD, I haue of mine owne gold, and siluer, which I haue giuen to the house of God beside all that I haue prepared for the house of my God, I haue prepared for the house of the sanctuary, euen three thousand talentes of of golde, of the gold of Ophir, and seuen thousand talents of fined Siluer, to ouerlay the walles of the houses. The golde for the things of gold, and the siluer for the things of siluer, and for all the worke by the hands of artificers, and who is willing to fill his hand to day vnto the Lorde. So the princes of the Families, and the princes of the tribes of Israell, and the captaines of thousands and of hundreths, which the rulers of the king his work offered willingly & they gaue for the seruice of the house of God, fiue thousand talentes of gold, & ten thousand peeces, and ten thousand talents of siluer, & eighteene thousand talents of brasse, and one hundreth talentes of yron. And

with

with whom precious ſtones were founde, gaue them to the treaſure of the houſe of the Lord by the hand of Iehiel the Gerſhonite. And the people reioiced whē they offred willingly: for they offred willingly vnto the Lorde with a perfect heart. And David the king alſo reioyced with great ioy. Therfore David bleſſed the Lord before all the congregation, and David ſaid. Bleſſed be thou, ô Lord God of Iſrael, our father for euer and euer. Thine ô Lord is greatnes, and power, and glory, and victory, and prayſe, for all that is in heauen, and earth is thine: Thine is the kingdome, ô Lord, and thou excelleſt as head ouer all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou raigneſt ouer all, and in thyne hand is power, and ſtrength: and in thine hand it is to make great, and to giue ſtrength vnto all. Now therfore our God, we thank thee, and prayſe thy glorious name. But who am I? and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer willingly after this ſort? for all things come of thee; & of thine owne hand we haue giuen thee: For we are ſtraungers before thee, and ſoiourners, like all our fathers: Our dayes are like the ſhadow vpon the earth, & there is none abiding: ô Lord

our God in al this abundance, that we haue prepared, to build thee an houſe for thy holy name, is of thine hande, and all is thine: I know alſo my God, that thou trieſt the hart, and haſt pleaſure in righteouſneſſe: I haue offred willingly in the vprightneſſe of mine heart all theſe things: now alſo haue I ſeen thy people which are found here to offer vnto thee willingly with ioy, ô Lord God ABRAHAM, IZZAK, and ISRAEL our forefathers, keepe this for euer in purpoſe, and the thoughtes of the heart of thy people, and prepare their hearts vnto thee. And giue vnto SOLOMON my Sonne a perfect heart, to keepe thy commaundementes, thy teſtimonies, and thy ſtatutes, and to do all thinges, and to build the houſe which I haue prepared. And DAVID ſayd vnto all the congregation: Nowe bleſſe the Lorde your God: And all the congregation bleſſed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed downe their heads, and worſhipped the Lord, and the king. &c. So ſhall our moſte gratious prince and her people, not onely in contemplation beholde this houſe, as DAVID did the other, but with SOLOMON alſo, ſee it erected, in al perfection, and reioyce wonderfullye in the glorious beautye thereof.

How

How much would this worthy worke aduaunce the honor of our Lord Chriſt? who no doubt, woulde honor you all againe in that great day, and make mention of this noble acte in that glorious aſſembly, to your vnſpeakeable comfort. Howe much ſhould you make the angels of God to reioyce; who are glad at the conuerſiō of one ſinner? How many that remayne in their manifold ſinnes and ignorance, would the Lord conuert, if theſe workemen were ſent abroad to euery place? For the harueſt is great, and the laborers are few. Thē ſhould the Lord his eyes be more vigilant to gard her royall perſon and the whole land. Then ſhould all the people bee knit together in one true religion, and be of one heart, and one ſoule, and not be caried away with the blaſt of euery Ieſuite, ſaying: Will you forſake the religion of your forefathers? Liued they not well? Had they not plenty of all things? For we thinke that nothing wil deſtroy theſe vermine of the land without the plentiful preaching of the word. But beyng enriched therwith, we ſhould earneſtly deſpiſe the Pope his traſh, and treade it vnder his feete as dung, which is now very ſaleable in this land. Then ſhould theſe Ieſuites

be forced to cry as it were skrich owles not beyng able to abide the cleare light of the Goſpell, and flie into deſolate places, and mourne with the dragons at Rome. Then ſhould the prayers of the people which ſhould be borne a newe by the immortall ſeed of the word, be as the ſound of many Orators, for the preſeruation of her maieſties perſon, the honourable counſell, the inferiour magiſtrates, and the peace of the whole land. Then, when the Lord his way ſhall be knowen vpon this earth, and his ſauing health among all this people, then ſhall our land bring foorth her encreaſe, & God euen our owne God ſhall giue vs his bleſſing. Then ſhall it be knowen that the Miniſters of the Worde, are the chariots and horſemen of Iſrael. Moſt humbly therfore we pray, and beſeeche our moſt gratious Soueraigne, and you the right honourable Counſellers and the Nobility of this Land, you reuerend Fathers of the Cleargy, you woorthy Iudges of the Lawe, and alſo you right Worſhipfull Knightes and Burgeſſes of the Lower Houſe, not to ſhrinck away and waſh your handes of this worke, but to raiſe vp your ſelues, and as euery one hath receiued from Ieſus Chriſte greater

greater wisedome, authority, and magnanimity then another, so to striue and contend one with another, to strengthen the army of Christ, and to place him in the royall seate of his kingdome. Which thing performed, as it woulde bee a glorious example for all Christendome to imitate, and a day of ioy and solemnity, more excellent then that day which the Iewes helde for their deliuerance from the conspiracy of Hammon, not onely in this present age, but also in all posterities to come: so would it bee the dolefullest day to the kingdom of the diuell and Antichrist, that euer was knowen in this land. Which our most mercifull father of his infinite mercy in Christ bring to passe: To whose blessing, and direction of his holy spirite, in all your affaires, and consultations, wee commend you, with vnfained prayers this tyme and euer.

Amen.